

INTERNATIONAL UNION, UNITED  
AUTOMOBILE, AEROSPACE & AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENT WORKERS  
OF AMERICA—UAW,

May 1, 2007.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: This week the House is scheduled to take up the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2007 (H.R. 1592.) The UAW strongly supports this hate crimes prevention legislation. We urge you to vote for this vital legislation and to oppose any weakening amendments.

This legislation would strengthen existing federal hate crimes laws by removing unnecessary obstacles to federal prosecution and providing authority for federal involvement in a wider category of bias-motivated crimes. Specifically, H.R. 1592 would eliminate the current requirement that the crime must have been committed because of the victim's involvement in a "federally protected activity," such as voting, serving on a jury or attending public school. It would also permit federal involvement in the prosecution of bias-motivated crimes based on the victim's gender, sexual orientation or disability.

This measure has repeatedly attracted majority, bipartisan support in both the Senate and the House. In the 109th Congress, the House of Representatives approved the text of this measure as an amendment to the Children's Safety Act by a vote of 223-199 on September 14, 2005. In the 108th Congress, on June 15, 2004, the Senate approved this measure as an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005 by a vote of 65-33. In September 2004, the House approved a motion to instruct its conferees to retain this provision in conference by a vote of 213-186. Unfortunately, this legislation was dropped from the final conference report.

The UAW believes there is a need for a strong federal response against hate crimes. Congress has an opportunity to provide leadership on this vital issue by acting to strengthen the federal hate crimes statute. We therefore urge you to support the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2007 (H.R. 1592) and to oppose any weakening amendments.

Thank you for considering our views on this important issue.

Sincerely,

ALAN REUTHER,  
*Legislative Director.*

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, the bill before us provides much needed support for local law enforcement agencies in the fight against violent hate crimes. That's why so many law enforcement agencies all across the country are enthusiastically supporting this legislation. That's why 31 State Attorney Generals, including the Republican Attorney General from the State of Washington, supports this bill.

Victims have reported an average of 191,000 hate crime incidents annually since the year 2000. Seventy-three percent of Americans support strengthening hate crimes laws.

This bill, as I said, is endorsed by virtually every major law enforcement organization in the country. The legislation is also supported by President George H.W. Bush's Attorney General, Dick Thornburg. This legislation is virtually identical to the version approved by a bipartisan majority in the Republican-led 109th Congress.

Hate crimes affect more than one individual, Mr. Speaker. It is committed

with the intention of terrorizing a group of people or an entire community.

Now, we've heard arguments from some on the other side that this bill somehow violates the first amendment. In fact, the measure includes an explicit statement that the bill may not be interpreted as limiting first amendment protections language that is based on the existing Washington State hate crime statute. The provision only applies when a person's conduct, not thought or speech, is being punished.

Mr. Speaker, the United States Supreme Court has rejected the claim that a hate crime law is a law against thoughts. The Supreme Court recognized in *Wisconsin v. Mitchell* that it is common to take motive into account in criminal law.

So to those of my colleagues who are worried about protecting bigoted speech, they can stop worrying because this bill, sadly, will not affect that kind of speech.

Now, some have argued that this law is an unnecessary extension of the Federal Government. The bill provides support and resources to assist local law enforcement agencies. The majority of hate crimes will still be prosecuted at the State level. The Federal Government only has jurisdiction in certainly limited and extreme circumstances.

The Federal Government has the responsibility, Mr. Speaker, to protect all Americans against bigotry and against violent crime.

So what we have before us, Mr. Speaker, is relatively simple; you either support providing an expansion of civil liberties and civil rights and civil protections under the law, or you don't. So that is the question that my colleagues have to deal with.

I think the answer is simple. I think we should support this legislation. This is a good bill. It should enjoy bipartisan support because it has in the past. I would urge all of my colleagues to support this rule and to support the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of adoption of the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 217, nays 196, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 296]

YEAS—217

Abercrombie	Grijalva	Neal (MA)
Ackerman	Gutierrez	Obearstar
Allen	Hall (NY)	Obey
Altmire	Hare	Oliver
Andrews	Harman	Pallone
Arcuri	Hastings (FL)	Pascarell
Baca	Herseeth Sandlin	Pastor
Baird	Higgins	Payne
Baldwin	Hill	Perlmutter
Bean	Hinchev	Peterson (MN)
Becerra	Hinojosa	Pomeroy
Berkley	Hodes	Price (NC)
Berman	Holden	Rahall
Bishop (GA)	Holt	Rangel
Bishop (NY)	Honda	Rodriguez
Blumenauer	Hooley	Rothman
Boren	Hoyer	Roybal-Allard
Boswell	Inslee	Ruppersberger
Boucher	Israel	Rush
Boyda (KS)	Jackson (IL)	Ryan (OH)
Brady (PA)	Jackson-Lee	Salazar
Braley (IA)	(TX)	Sánchez, Linda
Brown, Corrine	Jefferson	T.
Butterfield	Johnson (GA)	Sanchez, Loretta
Capps	Kagen	Sarbanes
Capuano	Kanjorski	Schakowsky
Cardoza	Kaptur	Schiff
Carnahan	Kennedy	Schwartz
Carney	Kildee	Scott (GA)
Carson	Kilpatrick	Scott (VA)
Castor	Kind	Serrano
Chandler	Klein (FL)	Sestak
Clarke	Kucinich	Shea-Porter
Clay	Langevin	Sherman
Cleaver	Lantos	Shuler
Clyburn	Larsen (WA)	Sires
Cohen	Larson (CT)	Skelton
Conyers	Lee	Slaughter
Cooper	Levin	Smith (WA)
Costa	Lewis (GA)	Snyder
Costello	Lipinski	Solis
Courtney	Loebach	Space
Cramer	Lofgren, Zoe	Spratt
Crowley	Lowe	Stark
Cuellar	Lynch	Stupak
Cummings	Mahoney (FL)	Sutton
Davis (AL)	Maloney (NY)	Tauscher
Davis (CA)	Markey	Thompson (CA)
Davis (IL)	Marshall	Thompson (MS)
Davis, Lincoln	Matheson	Tierney
DeFazio	Matsui	Towns
DeGette	McCarthy (NY)	Udall (CO)
Delahunt	McCollum (MN)	Udall (NM)
DeLauro	McDermott	Van Hollen
Dicks	McGovern	Velázquez
Dingell	McIntyre	Vislosky
Doggett	McNerney	Walz (MN)
Donnelly	McNulty	Wasserman
Doyle	Meehan	Schultz
Edwards	Meek (FL)	Waters
Ellison	Meeks (NY)	Watson
Ellsworth	Melancon	Watt
Emanuel	Michaud	Waxman
Eshoo	Miller (NC)	Weiner
Etheridge	Miller, George	Welch (VT)
Farr	Mitchell	Wexler
Filner	Mollohan	Wilson (OH)
Frank (MA)	Moore (KS)	Woolsey
Giffords	Moore (WI)	Wu
Gillibrand	Murphy (CT)	Wynn
Gonzalez	Murphy, Patrick	Yarmuth
Gordon	Murtha	
Green, Al	Nadler	
Green, Gene	Napolitano	

NAYS—196

Aderholt	Boozman	Coble
Akin	Boustany	Cole (OK)
Alexander	Boyd (FL)	Conaway
Bachmann	Brady (TX)	Crenshaw
Bachus	Brown (SC)	Davis (KY)
Baker	Brown-Waite,	Davis, David
Barrett (SC)	Ginny	Davis, Tom
Barrow	Buchanan	Deal (GA)
Bartlett (MD)	Burgess	Dent
Barton (TX)	Burton (IN)	Diaz-Balart, L.
Berry	Buyer	Diaz-Balart, M.
Biggert	Calvert	Doolittle
Bilbray	Camp (MI)	Drake
Bilirakis	Campbell (CA)	Dreier
Bishop (UT)	Cannon	Duncan
Blackburn	Cantor	Ehlers
Blunt	Capito	Emerson
Boehner	Carter	English (PA)
Bonner	Castle	Everett
Bono	Chabot	Fallin